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First record of the Rufous Potoo *Nyctibius bracteatus* and in-flight drinking by the Semi-collared Nighthawk *Lurocalis semitorquatus* in French Guiana

by Nigel Cleere & Johan Ingels

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Between 6 September and 6 October 2000, we conducted nocturnal surveys at several localities around the village of Saül (53°12'W, 03°35'N) in central French Guiana. Records of two Caprimulgiform species are of particular importance and are documented here.

RUFIOUS POTOO *Nyctibius bracteatus*

One heard on 20 September from primary rainforest along the Creek Limonade, c. 5 km south of Saül. It called almost continuously between 0515 and 0600 h, with pauses of

up to 30 seconds or more between each set of notes. The call, an 'owl-like' series of bubbling *boobooboo* notes that trailed off and descended in pitch at the end of each series, matched the description given for this species by Cleere (1998) and was immediately identified by playback of a recording taken from Ranft & Cleere (1998). A second bird was heard calling briefly at dusk on 22 September by NC, from primary rainforest on the outskirts of Saül. Although it has been speculated that this secretive species might occur in French Guiana (Tostain *et al* 1992) these appear to be the first records for the country.

SEMI-COLLARED NIGHTHAWK *Lurocalis semitorquatus*

One seen by NC at 1840 h on 22 September, in good light *c.* 10 min before dusk, at a small, algae-infested pond just inside primary rainforest alongside Saül airstrip. It flew around the pond before descending to the surface, where it drank by dipping its bill into the water. Whilst drinking, it held its wings up in a V above its body and its tail up and slightly fanned. It then flew around the pond again, gained height and disappeared over the forest. Approximately 5 minutes after the bird disappeared from view, a second (or the same?) bird appeared and also drank from the pond. Both birds appeared long-winged, short-tailed and frequently glided for short distances, their silhouette and flight not appearing bat-like as suggested by Cleere (1998). At close range and in such good light, both birds also appeared very dark, but the narrow white tips to the second and third tail feathers (R2 and R3) were conspicuous as the tail was often fanned in flight. Although drinking in flight has been recorded for several *Chordeiles* nighthawks and *Caprimulgus* nightjars (Cleere 1998), these records appear to be the first for this particular species.

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